

DATeline: WASHINGTON D.C. #118
ROBERT GRANT

OCTOBER 6, 1976

BLACK AMERICANS IN CONGRESS
(INSERTS IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: DATeline: WASHINGTON D.C. -- PICTURES IN SOUND OF PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS IN THE NATION'S CAPITOL BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE VOICE OF AMERICA EACH WEEK (AT THIS TIME). A NEW BICENTENNIAL EXHIBITION OPENED RECENTLY ON CAPITOL HILL HONORING THE FORTY-FIVE BLACK AMERICANS WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS. HERE WITH THE STORY IS VOA'S -----.

NARR: THREE SENATORS AND FORTY-TWO MEN AND WOMEN REPRESENTATIVES ARE HONORED IN THIS PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBIT -- A BICENTENNIAL TRIBUTE TO THE BLACK LEGISLATORS.

AT THE OPENING CEREMONIES IN THE CAPITOL BUILDING SENATOR EDWARD BROOKE OF MASSACHUSETTS DESCRIBED THE EXHIBIT AS A RECOGNITION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS BLACK AMERICANS HAVE MADE TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT.

TAPE: CUT ONE -- BROOKE

"THERE ARE MANY REASONS TO BE PROUD OF THIS PROJECT. IT IS THE FIRST COMPLETE PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION OF ALL THE BLACK AMERICANS WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE U.S. CONGRESS. MANY FACES SELDOM SEEN BEFORE, AND NAMES UNFAMILIAR, WILL NOW BE REMOVED FROM OBSCURITY. ITS PRESENCE IN THE CAPITOL BUILDING, AND WHERE EVER IT IS DISPLAYED IN LATER YEARS, WILL PROVIDE GREAT INSPIRATION TO THOSE WHO SEE IT.

"I AM PROUD TO BE REPRESENTED IN THIS EXHIBITION -- PROUD TO HAVE FOLLOWED THOSE WHO SERVED IN THE CONGRESS DURING TIMES EVEN MORE TURBULENT THAN THESE. AND I AM PROUD TO BE SERVING WITH MY BLACK COLLEAGUES IN THIS ERA, FACING NEW OBSTACLES AND NEW CHALLENGES, AND ASSISTING IN THE FIGHT FOR NEW OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN AMERICA'S DEMOCRATIC AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS."

NARR: SENATOR EDWARD BROOKE OF MASSACHUSETTS.

CONGRESSWOMAN YVONNE BURKE OF CALIFORNIA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS, BELIEVES THE BICENTENNIAL EXHIBIT WILL "BE AN INSPIRATION TO MILLIONS OF BLACKS, MINORITIES, AND OTHER AMERICANS."

THE PHOTO COLLECTION OF THE NATION'S BLACK LEGISLATORS CONTAINS SOME PICTURES OF RARE AND HISTORIC VALUE. AN EXAMPLE OF THIS IS THE PHOTO OF THE NATION'S FIRST BLACK SENATOR, HIRSH REVELS OF MISSISSIPPI. REVELS WAS ELECTED BY HIS STATE'S LEGISLATURE TO FILL THE VACANT SEAT OF JEFFERSON DAVIS, WHO HAD BEEN PRESIDENT OF THE REBELLIOUS SOUTHERN CONFEDERACY DURING THE NATION'S CIVIL WAR DAYS. ANOTHER DISTINGUISHED SENATOR WAS BLANCHE KELSO BRUCE, ALSO ELECTED FROM MISSISSIPPI DURING THE RECONSTRUCTION DAYS FOLLOWING THE CIVIL WAR.

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TWO OTHER BLACK CONGRESSMEN, ONE A REPRESENTATIVE AND THE OTHER A SENATOR, WERE ALSO ELECTED TO THE CONGRESS IN THOSE EARLY YEARS BUT THEY WERE NEVER SEATED AND ARE NOT PART OF THE EXHIBITION.

IN THE CASE OF GOVERNOR P.B.S. PINCHACK OF LOUISIANA, WHO HAD BEEN ELECTED AS A CONGRESSMAN AND LATER A SENATOR, THE SENATE KEPT DEBATING WHETHER TO SEAT HIM UNTIL HIS TERM WAS OVER. BUT LATER THEY VOTED HIM HIS ENTIRE SENATE SALARY. HE LIVED IN WASHINGTON UNTIL 1921. /

NARR: THE BICENTENNIAL EXHIBITION OF BLACK LEGISLATORS IS TO BE KEPT
(CONT'D) IN THE U.S. CAPITOL FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE YEAR. THEN IT'S
TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS FOR EXHIBITION
IN THEIR HOME STATE.

SENATOR BROOKE, IN OPENING THE EXHIBIT, POINTED OUT THAT IT
FILLS AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE NATION'S HISTORY:

TAPE: CUT TWO -- BROOKE

"IT (THE EXHIBIT) SAYS THAT, YES, THERE IS A NEED DURING
OUR NATION'S BICENTENNIAL TO RECOGNIZE THE ROLE PLAYED BY
BLACK AMERICANS IN THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF OUR
NATIONAL LEGISLATURE. AND IT IS ALL THE MORE APPROPRIATE
THAT WE DO IT HERE WITHIN THE CONGRESS. TO THOSE WHO
QUESTION THE VALUE OF MINORITY PARTICIPATION IN AMERICA'S
TWO HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY OBSERVANCE, I REPLY THAT WE MUST."

NARR: THE PROMINENT HISTORIAN DOCTOR BENJAMIN QUARLES, WRITING
IN A PUBLICATION TO ACCOMPANY THE EXHIBIT, DESCRIBES THE
INDIVIDUALS SHOWN AS MEN AND WOMEN WHO LIVED, THEN AND NOW,
ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF THE FUTURE.

"THEY ALL HOLD A SENSE OF COLLECTIVE PURPOSE," HE NOTES,
"TO PRESS ON IN QUEST OF A BETTER AMERICA."

ANNCR: THIS HAS BEEN DATELINE, STORIES ABOUT PEOPLE AND PLACES
IN THE UNITED STATES. TODAY, YOU HEARD DATELINE: WASHINGTON
D.C. AND A REPORT ON AN EXHIBIT HONORING THE BLACK AMERICAN
SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN -- PAST AND PRESENT. NEXT WEEK
(AT THIS TIME) ANOTHER DATELINE. THIS IS -----.

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